

Sower

Division of Developmental Disabilities

April 2011

sowing seeds of closer communication among
Nebraskans working to ensure dignity,
choice and quality of life for persons with
developmental disabilities

From the Directors Desk. . .

Greetings! As you may have noticed, the Sower has been on a bit of a hiatus this winter. We've been busy here at the Division of Developmental Disabilities! Over the past few months Community Based Services has been working hard towards implementation of our new waiver programs and the Beatrice State Developmental Center (BSDC) has been working towards recertification.

When we began looking at how to recertify BSDC, we determined the best approach was to divide campus into five individual Intermediate Care Facilities (ICFs). Each ICF serves the unique needs of its residents and must be licensed and certified separately. This requires each ICF to pass a licensing inspection and two federal surveys. To date, three of the facilities are licensed and one is fully recertified. All five ICFs are on track to full federal certification!

Over in Community Based Services our new waiver programs have been giving individuals more choices and flexibility in the types of services

they receive. Enclosed with this issue of the Sower, you'll find a DVD that outlines the new services and shows a few examples of individuals who have had success with varying services. We hope that you'll take a look and discuss those options with your service coordinator at your individual and family meeting prior to your next IPP meeting.

In addition to all the exciting changes in service delivery, we've also secured a web based electronic documentation system to enhance our quality improvement efforts at BSCD and in Community Based Services. The system, called Therap Services, will be available for every individual the Division serves;. It is a comprehensive system that allows providers to track everything from their staffing schedules to an individual's medication administration charts. The most important aspect of the new system, however, is the incident reporting mechanism; this will help us meet the requirements of the US Department of Justice in addition to the reporting requirements of our Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Waivers. This will also equip us to ana-

lyze incident trends to more effectively ensure quality of services.

We're very excited to be able to offer such a system! We'd like to thank our divisional partners in Medicaid and Long Term Care who helped us get permission from the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to use funding from the Money Follows the Person (MFP) program for this system.

As spring is upon us, we look forward to the many exciting adventures ahead. I thank our wonderful staff who bravely endure being overwhelmed with the multiple changes within our system. Their dedication to the people that we serve is absolutely amazing! The division is also thankful to our providers and community organizations that have been great partners. We all want to see developmental disability services in Nebraska be recognized once again for being great, and we are so close to that becoming a reality.

Jodi M. Fenner

March Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

By Terri Holman, DD Program Specialist

On March 9, 2011 Governor Dave Heineman proclaimed March Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month in Nebraska. Self-advocates, families, advocates, providers and state officials attended the ceremony at the State Capitol which celebrated the important contributions people with developmental disabilities make in our communities. In the photo, Courtney Kochner from Lincoln, a member of the Nebraska Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities, receives the proclamation from the Governor.

Picture provided by Mike Wight.



Certification of BSDC 400 State Building!

Friends, family, employees, and supporters of BSDC gathered March 20th to help celebrate the recent success of 400

State Building.

BSDC's 400 State Building Intermediate Care Facility (ICF) now meets all eight conditions of

participation in the ICF program. Eligibility of federal funding, is retroactive to the final survey, on February 18, 2011.

BSDC will go from being one large institution to having five smaller, independently-licensed ICF's on campus.

"BSDC has made significant progress and is providing quality services to individuals with developmental disabilities," Gov. Heineman said. "I'm gratified to see the work done over the past several years show such positive results. All five ICFS at BSDC are on track to be fully certified by this June 30."



Picture Left : Senator Wallman, Jessie Bjerrum, and family and Dan Howell celebrating 400 State Buildings Success.



The Nebraska Alliance for Full Participation Team is pleased to announce this free webinar series. Webinar topics relate to AFP's efforts to double the rate of employment of Nebraskans with intellectual / developmental disabilities. Learn more about our work by visiting www.allianceforfullparticipation.org.

AFP Adventures Around the USA
(CST)

April 28, 1:30 – 2:30 p.m.

During the webinar, we'll explore some of the most interesting activities currently engaged in by several of the 38 state teams associated with AFP. We'll chat about a few fascinating community initiatives spanning service, post-secondary education, and corporate diversity agendas now including people with disabilities. All of these have the potential for replication within Nebraska and all are demonstrating that people with disabilities are finding employment in both small and large businesses in a recession in every area of the U.S.

Speaker: Karen Flipppo, State Team Liaison, Alliance for Full Participation.

**Customized Self-Employment for Anyone, Anywhere, Anytime:
Creating Careers in a No-Jobs Labor Market**
(CST)

May 19, 1:30 - 2:30 p.m.

Customized self-employment builds on the energy created by supported employment, taking it to another level by refining the job development process, including self-employment as a legitimate career option. This seminar will be of particular interest to employment seekers, professionals, families and funders who seek to expand beyond traditional community employment. We'll identify a variety of collaborative funding and resource opportunities available to agencies and consumers in customized employment, state the advantages that self employment has over wage employment in the personal acquisition of wealth and equity, and explore the role of rehabilitation systems in expanding the use of customized employment strategies in both urban and rural settings.

Speaker: Cary Griffin, Senior Partner at Griffin-Hammiss.

Work IS Possible
(CST)

May 26, 1:30 -2:30 p.m.

Persons who experience disabilities and their families are in the best position to make choices about work when they receive good information about the impact of work on benefits. The more you know and understand, the better choices you can make about work. This webinar will help provide a general overview of the disability benefits that are administered by the Social Security Administration and the work incentives that individuals have available to them once work begins.

Speaker: Crystal Norvell, Easter Seals Nebraska

Setting Employment as the 1st Priority
(CST)

June 2, 1:30 – 2:30 p.m.

Employment First has become a national movement among some state agencies, employment and self advocacy organizations, such as National APSE, AFP and SABE, and employment service providers. The common thread among these groups is that employment is expected to be the first priority when discussing and offering day services for youth and adults with disabilities. This session will focus on several ingredients that are important when considering setting employment as the 1st priority. Topics include career planning, how to create the expectation of work, setting employment outcomes for your agency, data collection (what's important to track and why), and nationally recognized approaches to promote change within a service organization.

Speaker: Darla Wilkerson, The CSI Network

Nebraska Employers: What Do They Need From Us?
(CST)

June 9, 1:30 – 2:30 p.m.

In January of 2011, the NE AFP Team collaborated with the Nebraska State Council for the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM) to survey the membership of the SHRM Nebraska chapters about their perceptions and experiences in recruiting and hiring job candidates with intellectual / developmental disabilities. Eighty-one respondents gave us some great insights to what employers need and want. We'll review the survey results and their implications.

Speaker: Susan Rocker, University of Missouri Region 7 TACE Center

Registration is required. There is no cost to participate. You may sign up for the entire series, or pick and choose based on your interest. **Virtual seats are limited.** One week before the session you will be sent an email with a link to use to access the webinar the day of the event. **Registration closes April 15, 2011.**

To register go to: <http://TACE7surveys.NE-AFP-reg.sgizmo.com/s3/>

HELP Adult Services

By: Jan Schwee, Community Coordinator, HELP Adult Services

For nearly 30 years, HELP Adult Services, a non-profit organization, has been serving the disadvantaged who were either uninsured or underinsured or just unable to afford necessary medical equipment. The founders also recognized a severe need by dedicated family caregivers-- who could not afford to take a break from the duties of 24/7 family care giving—for respite relief. As a result, in 1982, HELP Adult Services established two very popular programs: the Respite Program and the Health & Medical Equipment Loan Program (H.E.L.P.).

The Respite (relief) Program provides a temporary break for family caregivers by training a temporary substitute--or respite caregiver--who is then able to provide a respite break for family caregivers for two to four hours a week.

The second major program offered by HELP Adult Services is the Health & Medical Equipment Loan Program (H.E.L.P.) assisting adults who are aging, have developmental disabilities, an illness, or chronic health problems to be able to acquire affordable medical equipment through HELP's durable medical equipment loan and recycle program.

With more than 9,000 items available, HELP can assist in acquiring a broad range of items from hospital beds, a spare wheelchair for the car, gel seat cushions, crutches, grab bars, adult diapers and even nutritional supplements.

Unlike many hospitals and medical facilities offering a few abandoned items, HELP has a dedicated warehouse filled with 9,000+ items. HELP accepts donated objects of a medical nature and the majority of equipment on site has been donated by individuals who no longer need the items for use by those who desperately do.

In the past few years HELP has hit a record number of requests for its medical equipment. Loss of jobs is one factor that includes loss of health insurance too, and more patients find their way to HELP Adult Services through their doctors, physical therapists, assisted living facilities and medical centers or past client referral. Finding what they need without having to pay the high cost of brand new equipment is, as one client recently explained, "the only *good* thing that has happened".

When the items are donated or returned, they are cleaned, repaired and prepared to loan for a fee much lower than retail prices. For

example, a transport chair available at a local retail store rents for \$30 per month, while HELP Adult Services can loan the 'same' transport chair for \$60 per year. If an item is needed longer, it is simply renewed by phone or mail. Individuals can select needed items on-site or they may choose to have items delivered (also available on a fee sliding scale) and assembled without ever coming to the organization.

After breaking her lower leg and ankle, Terri, age 48, needed a toilet seat riser, 2-wheel walker, over-the-bed table, and a sock aid. She later reported, "With the medical items, I was able to be released from the hospital earlier, and I was so glad to be home."

Items are typically donated by the community and area healthcare organizations as a form of recycling. By recycling medical equipment for nearly three decades, HELP has been a constant contributor to the community's eco-friendly status, preserving and protecting the environment for three decades.

Reducing the volume of medical items found in landfills, the program recycles and extends the life of many perfectly durable, often unused items and keeps them out of the trash for many years with loving care and extended life. The result of the Health and Medical Equipment Loan Program is that over 50,000 items have not been newly purchased and over 6,000 people obtain much needed affordable medical equipment every year.

You can access HELP Adult Services website at www.helpadultservices.org or by calling 402-341-6559.

YOU'RE INVITED!

The Nebraska DD Council Collaborative and the CSI Network are working together to gather feedback about how employment is impacting individuals with developmental disabilities.

Sees dates listed on the Calendar of Events on the last page of the Sower, shown as "Employment DD Grant Focus Group." If interested in participating please contact Darla Wilkerson via email at dwilkerson46@aol.com to schedule a time. Your time and comments would be appreciated.

Transition to New Waiver Services

When can transition to new services occur?

2011 will be a year of implementation. At the individual/family meeting prior to the annual IPP, the Service Coordinator will provide the annual budget to the individual/family. It is at this time, the individual may consider whether to continue with his/her present services or transition to the new services offered by the waiver or a combination of both. The service coordinator will discuss the process of planning and actively working with individuals to help them identify life skills and real life experiences to ensure opportunities for community integration and inclusion.

What is the Service Coordinator's role in transitioning to new waiver services?

The Service Coordinator must engage in person center planning. This means that the Service Coordinator will meet and discuss with the individual and their legal representative, if applicable, the opportunities available to access services and supports designed to assist the individual in achieving their vision for a meaningful life. This interaction should occur during private conversations with the individual and their legal representative (if applicable) known as the individual/family meeting. From that discussion, the Service Coordinator will document on the Individual Plan the individual's hopes, dreams and desires. The individual's Plan will identify the outcomes the individual has prioritized for themselves. Individuals will also identify who they choose to attend their Individual

Planning meeting to determine what strategies support their needs. The Individual Planning meeting should be a cooperative effort between both formal and informal supports which include family, friends, neighbors, potential providers and other community members.

The IPP team will develop SMART goals that are **Specific, Measurable, Action oriented, Realistic, and Timely** based on the preferences, interests, and needs of the individual.

What are the steps Service Coordination will take?

1. Meet with the individual in private and ask them to identify their hopes and dreams for their future.
2. Identify and share possible resources including both formal and informal supports as well as the annual funding amount available to the individual based on the OAP.
3. Have the individual identify who they want to participate in their team meeting.
4. Invite identified participants to the meeting.
5. Set the ground rules for the meetings and have the individual identify their outcomes and needs.

6. Facilitate discussions about possible strategies.
7. The individual/guardian (if applicable) select the strategies they would like to utilize.
8. Document the individual's options and choice on their IPP.
 - a. Identify the individual's strengths.
 - b. Match the strengths with appropriate interventions and activities whenever possible.
 - c. Make a plan that includes a coordinated set of activities and long-range goals that will lead to success.
9. Implement and monitor IPP.

What should individuals look for in a quality transition planning?

- Age appropriateness
- Activities that are community based
- Functional skills such as displaying good work habits, communicating needs, making decisions, etc.
- Focus on skills that can be generalized across multiple areas such as home, work, church, etc.
- Activities that are based on the individual's preferences and interests, desired goals, and present abilities as they relate to transition goals.

The Department of Health and Human Services website is currently under construction as we work on updating providing the most complete and helpful information to the individuals and families we service. Thank you for your patience. Be sure to check out our website at:
www.dhhs.ne.gov/Developmental_Disabilities

Assume the Best

From the www.disabilityisnatural.com E-Newsletter by Kathie Snow

Apple's Steve Jobs once said, "Let's make a dent in the universe." How about if we make a dent in Disability World? Let's assume the best—instead of the worst—about children and adults with disabilities. We can *make the choice* to do this, can't we?

Let's assume all children with developmental disabilities have unlimited potential, the same assumption we have about children *without* disabilities.

Let's assume they can learn the three Rs and other academics in general ed classrooms. Let's assume they can participate in and contribute to ordinary, age-appropriate, inclusive activities. And let's assume they'll grow up to be successful and productive.

Let's assume adults with disabilities can also be successful—in a job, volunteer work, or other endeavors of their choice. Let's assume they can live more interdependently, do more for themselves, etc.

Let's assume the best: that children and adults with disabilities are competent and should be the drivers of their own destinies. Let's assume they can triumph at home, school, work, or community when they have assistive technology devices (power wheelchairs, communication devices, etc.), supports, and/or accommodations—the same things needed by people without disabilities.

Let's assume all children and adults with disabilities can achieve these great outcomes *when they're given opportunities to do so*. This requires us to also assume the best about ourselves—parents, teachers,

service providers, and/or others. First, that we have the chutzpah to fling aside the old, negative attitudes that have clouded our vision. Second, that we are competent to do what it takes so children and adults with disabilities lead wonderfully normal lives, instead of "special," segregated lives.

Imagination is more important than knowledge.

Albert Einstein

To believe in something not yet proved and to underwrite it with our lives: it is the only way we can leave the future open.

Lillian Smith

We don't have to first know *how* to make any of this happen—we need to first believe it *can happen* (assume the best). Once that belief is firmly entrenched, the "how" will come. And sometimes it's one step forward and two steps back. But positive assumptions and stick-with-it attitudes will see us through.

Let's assume the best in others, too. Throughout our son's life, we've assumed the best regarding Benjamin's inclusion in school, Cub Scouts, T-ball, drama classes, college, and more. We assumed others were not inherently prejudiced toward people with disabilities like our son; we assumed they had good hearts and would welcome our son. We presented positive perceptions of Benjamin and his participation and provided whatever information and/or assistance others needed. Then we all enjoyed the positive outcomes.

If you can't quite find it in yourself to assume the best—if you want to fall back on "being realistic" or some other notion—then *fake it* for an hour, or a day, or a week...Fake it and see how your thinking can change: you'll see things in a new and different way, awesome possibilities will be revealed, and more. It can be an eye-opening experience!

The ultimate barrier facing children and adults with disabilities is not disability, but others' negative attitudes, low expectations, and more—assuming the worst. We have the power to eliminate that barrier; we can make the choice to assume the best.

Paul Harvey once said, "I've never seen a monument erected to a pessimist." *Become a hair-on-fire optimist and change the life of a person with a disability.* Your assume-the-best efforts will also create a monument of yourself that will live on and on and on in the lives of those you touch.

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Nebraska Direct Support Professionals Network

By Mary Lawson

The Nebraska Direct Support Professionals Network (NDSPN) is the Nebraska State Chapter of the National Alliance of Direct Support Professionals (NADSP). It is part of a growing national movement to elevate the status and recognize the abilities and accomplishments of the men and women who directly support individuals with disabilities every day.

NDSPN was made possible through an opportunity grant from the Nebraska Developmental Disabilities Council.

Joining the state chapter of Nebraska Direct Support Professionals gives you the opportunity to join with others to effect change for the direct support workforce. Your state chapter is the voice and the stories of the DSPs, we celebrate successes and share best practices. By becoming a member of the state chapter you become a part of a team that can make a world of difference for individuals

with disabilities and the people who support them.

Membership in NDSPN is open to all individuals, regardless of whether they are direct support professionals, or corporate sponsors who wish to make a world of difference in people's lives by supporting the profession of direct support. Becoming a member of the state chapter offers new and rewarding opportunities; you find camaraderie sharing your experiences with other people who also provide direct support services. Right now there are many DSPs facing the same day to day challenges that you face, whether it be problems with co-workers, advocating for the people that you support, or discovering best practices that are being used across the country. Recognizing the value of direct support workers and empowering each other are all reasons to be part of NDSPN.



One goal of the NDSPN is to promote educational opportunities for Nebraska's DSPs. Our educational goal is for 80% of the direct support workforce to be certified DSPs through the National Alliance of Direct Support Professionals. The people that we support deserve nothing less than a well-trained, experienced and motivated staff person at their side supporting them to reach their dreams.

NDSPN is currently looking for dedicated individuals to establish the NDSPN Board of Directors, developing further goals and setting the course for NDSPN. For more information about becoming a member of NDSPN send an e-mail inquiry to Mary Lawson, Nebraska State Contact at Nebraskadsps@gmail.com, then become a fan of NDSPN on Facebook. Check out the national site at www.nadsp.org for additional information and the requirements to become certified. Be the first. Be the best!



Pictures Provided by: Kerry Zingg taken at Holmes Lake in Lincoln, on March, 5, 2011

2011 Polar Plunge

CONGRATULATIONS to all that were brave enough to take the plunge!





Division of Developmental Disabilities

301 Centennial Mall South
Lincoln, NE 68509

Calendar of Events!

APRIL		26	Employment DD Grant Focus Group, Scotts-bluff
20	DD Advisory Committee Meeting, Lincoln NSOB LLF	JUNE	
26	Nebraska Provider Network (NPN) Meeting, Lincoln NSOB LLD	2	AFP—Setting Employment as the 1st Priority Webinar
28	Alliance for Full Participation — AFP Adventures Around the World Webinar	9	AFP—Nebraska Employers: What do they need from us Webinar
MAY		27 & 28	Employment DD Grant Focus Group, Norfolk
13	DD Planning Council Meeting, Lincoln	29 & 30	Employment DD Grant Focus Group, Omaha
19	AFP—Customized Self Employment for Anyone, Anywhere, Any time Webinar	JULY	
24	Nebraska Provider Network (NPN), Lincoln, NSOB LLD	26	Nebraska Provider Network Meeting, Kearney
24	Employment DD Grant Focus Group, North Platte	AUGUST	
26	AFP—Work IS possible Webinar	19	DD Advisory Committee Meeting, Lincoln LLB

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